

Story from **Foot & Ankle**
CENTER OF ILLINOIS

Advanced bunion surgery restores function and beauty

Getting individuals back on their feet more quickly with advanced bunion surgery.

By **Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois**

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Treating bunions with advanced surgical procedures for better outcomes. Getty Images/Stockphoto

Bunions are a common foot disorder affecting nearly 33% of U.S. adults, according to the National Library of Medicine. They're also more prevalent in women than men due to differences in anatomy, footwear and genetics.

"Given how widespread bunions are, there have been many different ways to treat them through surgery," said Dr. John Sigle, a podiatric physician. "One option is removing the portion of bone on the side of the big toe. Another is cutting and realigning soft tissue surrounding the big toe joint. However, a surgeon may also make cuts into the bone to realign the joint, or remove or reshape the bone in the big toe joint, among other techniques."

The main goals of bunion surgery

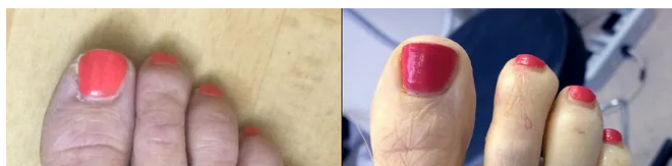
The goals of bunion surgery are to relieve pain, remove the bunion and keep it from returning, and correct the alignment and mechanics of the foot. It's pretty straightforward. If done correctly, the appearance of the foot will most likely improve. Unfortunately, traditional practices often result in substantial pain, a long recovery time and visible scarring. As a result, many people are reluctant to have surgery and modify their normal routines and lifestyles.

A look at traditional techniques

Traditional surgical methods for bunions typically consist of an incision on the top of the big toe joint that extends toward the midfoot. Some techniques also make an additional incision between the first and second toe on top of the foot extending to the midfoot. Wires, screws, pins and plates are then used to stabilize the bones during healing. In the majority of cases, a cast or boot immobilization is required along with non-weight-bearing crutches for six to eight weeks. Consequently, patients are inactive and not able to return to work during that time at full capacity.

Advances in minimally invasive bunion surgery

There is good news for bunion surgery. Advanced minimally invasive techniques are being used more often than traditional techniques. These advanced surgical techniques are more effective at correcting the bunion condition, reducing pain, enhancing healing and recovery, and minimizing scarring.



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An athlete's long road to recovery



Before (left) and after (right) showing improvement after surgery. Foot & Ankle Center Of Illinois

A cosmetic approach with a smaller incision on the side of the foot is hidden from the eye. It looks as though there's never been any surgical work done while wearing sandals or being barefoot. Dissolvable sutures, or stitches, are located under the skin to eliminate scarring and detection.

Precise surgical bone cuts are engineered to withstand weight bearing, realign toes and maintain proper foot structure and balance. Using the Swiss compression technique, tiny screws are used to fixate surgical bone cuts and stabilize the realignment. Patients are not required to be casted or on crutches. The Swiss compression technique allows patients to become weight bearing immediately after the procedure in a surgical shoe. They can even drive the day after surgery.

Most bunion surgery is done under light sedation and a local anesthetic, so there is no tube and no hangover from the anesthesia. Surgery is done as an outpatient procedure and patients go home the same day.

Improving outcomes for patients

"Minimally invasive surgical procedures with smaller incisions cause less disruption to soft tissue and result in less scarring," said Sigle. State-of-the-art laser treatments are also provided after surgery to significantly reduce swelling and pain. Patients are not required to be casted or on crutches. They can begin walking immediately and in most cases, wear comfortable, athletic shoes within two weeks. If desired, most women can wear high heels in 12 weeks.



Dr. John Sigle, a podiatric physician. Foot & Ankle Center Of Illinois

With minimally invasive procedures, patients are able to return to work and normal everyday activities faster than traditional bunion surgeries. Now patients can have their surgery done on a Thursday or Friday and return to work within four to five days.

Although they are not able to make lengthy or demanding walks, they are able to get in and out of a car and walk to their office. The majority of patients undergoing minimally invasive bunion surgery are highly satisfied and extremely happy with the way their feet look and feel, according to Sigle.

The keys to a successful bunion surgery

When considering bunion surgery, look for a foot and ankle surgeon who is knowledgeable, trustworthy and experienced. Choose a surgeon who will customize a surgical plan for your best outcome specifically. Ask if your surgeon has access to advanced diagnostic imaging to customize your surgical plan, and access to laser technology for post-operative recovery.

If you are looking for board certified foot and ankle surgeon or want additional information about Swiss compression technique for bunions and other options, contact the Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois at 217-787-2700 for a consultation or visit <https://www.myfootandanklecenter.com/>.

The Foot & Ankle Center of Illinois is located at 2921 Montvale Dr., Springfield, with outreach clinics in Decatur, Taylorville, Carlinville, Shelbyville, Sullivan and Monticello.

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